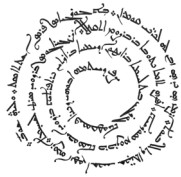
Jacob of Sarug's Homilies on the Six Days of Creation: The First Day



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General Editor
George A. Kiraz

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Sebastian P. Brock

Managing Editor
George A. Kiraz

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Jacob of Sarug's Homilies on the Six Days of Creation: The First Day

Translated with Introduction by
Edward G. Mathews Jr.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Bedjan	P. Bedjan, *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis* (see BIBLIOGRAPHY)
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
CBOTS	Coniectanea Biblica. Old Testament Series
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
FOTC	Fathers of the Church
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OCP	*Orientalia Christiana Periodica*
OS	*L'Orient Syrien*
OtSt	*Oudtestamentische Studien*
PdO	*Parole de l'Orient*
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
S	*Sobornost*
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
TFCLA	Texts from Christian Late Antiquity

INTRODUCTION

INFORMATION ON THIS HOMILY	
Homily Title:	Homily on the Fashioning of Creation, Day 1
Source of Text:	*Homiliae selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis* edited by Paul Bedjan (Paris-Leipzig 1905, 2nd ed. Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2006), vol. 3, pp. 1–27. [Homily 71a]
Lines:	520

OUTLINE

The verse homily translated here is actually not a separate homily, but is rather just one part of a single very long homily on the days of creation as delineated in the first chapter of Genesis. The complete text of this homily is found on pp. 1–151 of Bedjan's edition. It is divided up into seven "sub-homilies," one for each of the six days of creation and the last for the seventh day, the day on which God rested. Because of its length the editors have decided to publish each day as a separate fascicule. Thus, the verse homily translated here covers the first day of creation, or Genesis 1:1–5.

The complete homily constitutes the very first example of a *Hexaemeron*, or Commentary on the Six Days of Creation, in Syriac literature. Before Jacob, the only such Syriac work was Ephrem's *Commentary on Genesis*, nearly a third of which deals with the Creation and subsequent fall of Adam and Eve. Jacob may have known of Eusebius of Emesa's *Commentary on Genesis*, though there is no evidence that it was ever translated into Syriac. Neither of these, however, is a *Hexaemeron*. It is also very possible that Jacob was acquainted with a Syriac translation of the first great *Hexaemeron*, that composed by Basil the Great, although there is no evident influence in the verse homily translated here. Subsequently, Jacob was followed by the great *Hexaemeron* commentary of Jacob of Edessa, and another by Moshe bar Kepha. In general, commentators chose to write full length commentar-

ies on Genesis or, as became popular in Eastern Syrian tradition, works in *Question and Answer* format.[1]

In this homily Jacob, by means of his poetic composition, offers a very inspiring, thought-provoking and, at times, even breathtaking meditation on the first day of creation. He begins this homily with a long prayer to God begging for the grace necessary to speak of something that is entirely beyond the capacity of human speech. He also begs to come to the question with love and awe, the only way that one can truly come to any real understanding of God and His creation. In this homily, Jacob essentially insists on two main themes: that God—and God alone!—is the creator of everything that exists; and that everything that exists was created by God from nothing. Not to acknowledge these two fundamental principles leads inevitably to idolatry, an idolatry into which the world had already plunged when God chose to reveal Himself and the mystery of His creation to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

Jacob also writes at some length about the creation of the various angelic hosts, whose creation is not mentioned at all in the Genesis account. Early writers had speculated widely on when the creation of the spiritual beings actually took place. Ephrem had refused even to speculate about when the angels had been created. Jacob, who usually follows the teaching of Ephrem, here parts from him and sides with his contemporary and antagonist, Narsai, teaching that the angels were, in fact, created on the first day. From this, one can easily presume that by the mid-fifth century this was already the general teaching found at the School of Edessa. Although Moses had said nothing at all about the creation of the angels (a fact which formed the basis of Ephrem's refusal to speculate on when they were created), Jacob turns to the prophets, especially David, Ezekiel, and Daniel, to discover what they reveal about the angels and their creation. Jacob is very careful to emphasize the fact that even the angels were created from nothing; created specifically to give God continual praise, they learned of their own creation as they watched the rest of creation come into being. This then was one example of why God "had" to take six days to bring about

[1] One might consult, with profit, Erik ten Napel, "Some Remarks on the Hexaemeral Literature in Syriac," in H. J. W. Drijvers, et al., eds., *IV Symposium Syriacum: Literary Genres in Syriac Literature* (OCA 229; Rome: Pontificium Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1987), 57–69, and Bas Ter Haar Romeny, "Question-and-Answer Collections in Syriac Literature," in A. Volgers and C. Zamagni, eds., *Erotapokriseis: Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context* (Louvain: Peeters, 2004), 145–163.

creation rather than by doing it by a simple "snap of His fingers." Not only did God thus set out an orderly pattern for creation, but He also took six days so that all creatures could discern their own creation by seeing the creation of other, subsequent beings.

This is the first complete translation of this verse homily into English. A partial translation was included among the texts published in Joseph Trigg, *Biblical Interpretation* (see Bibliography, below).

SUMMARY

I. Prayer for grace to describe God's creation which is beyond all speech (1–48)
II. The mind's ascent into heaven to ponder what was before creation (49–98)
III. Creation due solely to the indescribable Goodness of God (99–130)
IV. God creates the world from nothing; Moses records it to combat idolatry (131–172)
V. God first brings into being all the hosts of heaven (173–212)
VI. The angelic hosts give continual praise to their Creator (213–238)
VII. Creation brought to perfection through the Holy Trinity (239–260)
VIII. Moses left the account of the angels for David, Ezekiel, and Daniel to tell (261–290)
IX. The witness of the prophets concerning the creation of the heavenly beings (291–332)
X. All Scripture witnesses that God is indeed Creator of all things, even angels (333–374)
XI. Why God did not create the world immediately, but took six days (375–424)
XII. The Creation of the darkness and the wind, which was not the Holy Spirit (425–464)
XIII. The Creation of light followed by the first night and the first day (465–520)

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

I. PRAYER FOR GRACE TO DESCRIBE GOD'S CREATION

ܐ. Grant,[2] O Creator, that I may speak of [Your] creation,
about how beautifully and how elegantly it has been fashioned.[3]

ܒ. With You[r help] may I begin to speak, as I am awestruck
at how much this mighty deed of Yours is beyond speech.

ܓ. In [Your] song reveal [Your] Goodness to [Your] worthless [servant]
that he may rise up and plow diligently with Your teaching.

ܕ. For poems, words, and songs belong to You,
as do beauties, glories, and adornments in their various forms.

ܗ. Grant me a mouth which, though unworthy, might sound forth Your glory,
for it is Your wont to clothe even ugly things with beauty. [4]

ܘ. And further, You clothe a bush,[5] which is not beautiful, with a rose,
a pretty color that is even more beautiful than a king's linen. Cf. Matt 6:28–29

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[2] The first 23 lines are an alphabetic acrostic, each line beginning with a successive letter of the Syriac alphabet, with line 23 repeating the *tau*, the last letter of the Syriac alphabet. Bedjan's text, following the manuscript, highlights this fact by writing each letter separately at the beginning of the line. I have, therefore, also added them in here to reflect the both the manuscripts and Bedjan's text.

[3] Jacob begins many of his homilies with a similar prayer that God might grant him assistance to accomplish his poetic task.

[4] Ephrem voices very similar sentiments in Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, IV.9, see also III.1.

[5] Jacob is engaged here with word play between the Syriac words *snayya* 'ugly' and *sanya* 'bush', no doubt here with a deliberate allusion to the Burning Bush in Exod 3:2.

B 71

ܒܟܠ ܐܘܡܢܐ ܒܚܟܡܬܐ.

1 א. ܐܝܠ ܕܢܦܫܐ ܕܐ ܟܝ ܫܘܝܐ ܟܠ ܚܟܡܬܐ: 1
ܘܟܠ ܥܡܠܬܗ ܘܟܠ ܩܠܝܠܐ ܒܐܦܣܘܩ̈ܗ.
ב. ܡܝ ܐܡܪ ܠܟܣܝܟ ܒܝ ܐܘܝ ܠܝ:
ܟܝ ܚܟܝܡ ܒܐܢܫ ܘܡܕ ܕܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܫ.
5 ג. ܟܝ ܚܠܡ ܒܟܬܝܪ ܥܣܩܐ ܟܠ ܟܠܐ:
ܘܒܩܠ ܩܠ ܣܟܠܬܟ ܥܠ ܫܦܬܝ ܥܨܠ.
ד. ܘܡܟ ܐܢ ܨܒܝܬ ܠܡܬ ܥܣܩܐ:
ܕܬܫܡ ܠܡܬ ܩܕܡ ܥܝܢ ܒܪ ܐܢܫ ܚܫܒܘܢ.
2 ה. ܐܡ ܟܡ ܚܦܘ ܒܝ ܠܐ ܫܡ ܐܚܪ ܥܠ ܦܘܡܟ:
10 ܘܐܝܠ ܐܝ ܢܫ ܟܬܒܐ ܒܝ ܘܐ ܚܕ ܐܚܪ.
ו. ܐܠ ܚܦܐ ܒܝ ܐܠ ܥܡ ܩܕܡ ܐܝܠ ܟܡ:
ܟܐ ܩܐ ܒܐ ܘܐ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܘܩܛ ܥܡ.

ܐ. Sow in me a homily so that, even with [my] thorns, a beautiful rose
by means of Your Spirit might put forth this story with greatest beauty.

ܒ. Something sweet came forth from something bitter by the hands of Samson, Cf. Judg 14:8–9
he scraped honey from a carcass and it was not abhorrent.

ܓ. The taste of a word [from Scripture] is sweeter than honey from a comb;
O lovers of life, come be refreshed by [God's] teaching.

ܕ. Gold is pleasing to the one who loves to buy gold,
but it is not so pleasing as teaching for one who meditates.

ܗ. The beauty of gold is all vanity and shadow,
while the beauty of a word [from Scripture] is a beauty perfect and divine.

ܘ. Temporal wealth cannot be retained by one who acquires it;
Let us possess You, O Lord, for You are a wealth that cannot be destroyed. Ps 112:3

ܙ. Let us seek wealth, riches and treasures from You,
and whoever possesses You will trample down and despise poverty.

ܚ. A fountain of life flows from You into the whole world, Cf. John 19:34
that it might water the earth which the serpent dried up by his breath.[6]

[6] That the world was dried up by the serpent's breath is not found in the Bible, but it has widespread ancient roots; see Jeffrey B. Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), esp. 94, 97, 113, 126–127. The image apparently goes back to Egyptian mythological concepts, see Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt, The Light of the World* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1907), 100.

١. ⠺⠁⠎ ⠀⠓⠁⠙⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠍⠁⠝ ⠀⠎⠁⠊⠙ ⠀⠞⠕ ⠀⠓⠊⠍ ⠀⠁⠝⠙ ⠀⠞⠓⠑⠽ ⠀⠍⠁⠙⠑ ⠀⠁ ⠀⠎⠞⠁⠽⠀
⠀⠎⠞⠁⠝⠙ ⠀⠁⠇⠕⠝⠑ ⠀⠁⠝⠙ ⠀⠞⠁⠅⠑ ⠀⠁ ⠀⠎⠞⠁⠝⠙ ⠀⠕⠝ ⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠓⠊⠇⠇⠎ ⠀⠁⠝⠙ ⠀⠎⠁⠊⠙ ⠀⠞⠕ ⠀⠞⠓⠑⠍ ⠀⠀
١٥ ٢. ⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠍⠁⠝ ⠀⠺⠁⠎ ⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠋⠁⠞⠓⠑⠗ ⠀⠕⠋ ⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠋⠁⠍⠊⠇⠽ ⠀⠕⠋ ⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠍⠁⠝⠽ ⠀⠀
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⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠞⠗⠊⠃⠑⠎ ⠀⠕⠋ ⠀⠊⠎⠗⠁⠑⠇ ⠀⠀
٣. ⠀⠁⠝⠙ ⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠀⠓⠁⠙ ⠀⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠀⠎⠁⠍⠑ ⠀⠀⠙⠁⠽ ⠀⠀⠁⠎ ⠀⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠀⠋⠊⠋⠞⠓ ⠀⠀⠙⠁⠽⠀
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٢٠ ⠀⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠀⠎⠁⠍⠑ ⠀⠀⠙⠁⠽ ⠀⠀⠁⠎ ⠀⠀⠞⠓⠑ ⠀⠀⠀

ס. Your Word holds the treasury of life to distribute
to those who would receive it with love.
ע. Your teaching is filled with the sources of light on all sides
and it clears the path of all obstacles for the world.
פ. Your gate is open for that one who seeks to come to you, Cf. Matt 7:13–14
Give me Your hand that I may enter and gather riches from You.
צ. Turn Your sunlight upon me, that I may be enlightened by You and recount Your story,
for unless it is with You, the soul will never have any light.
ק. Your yoke is light and Your path is cleared of obstacles; Matt 11:30
the world is a trackless waste,[a] grant that I may walk on Your path.[b] [a] Ps 107:40 [b] Ps 119:35
ר. Your Word is higher than both the eloquent and the silent,
and who can attain to speak of You, O Lord, except by You?
ש. Clear hearing [is required] from discerning people for a great discourse,
and the Word of Life from the speaker for an exalted account.
ת. May wonder take hold of the soul and faith the mind,
and let us sow teaching between that wonder and faith.
א. All the accounts of Divinity are a wonder,
and if he who speaks does not wonder he should indeed be silent
Unless it is with a love that is filled with wonder and faith,

⠓. ⠠⠍⠁⠙⠑ ⠞⠕ ⠝⠁⠍⠑ ⠞⠓⠑⠍ ⠉⠓⠁⠗⠁⠉⠞⠑⠗⠎: 3
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let no one dare to speak about [His] greatness.[7]

II. THE MIND'S ASCENT INTO HEAVEN

The mind has taken flight into the upper realms, to speak
about creation and about the beauty of its formation.
It gazed upon the heavens, the luminaries and their courses;
how the mind marvels at the wonder of all creation![8]
A homily stirred within me that is full of wonder about creation,
and it now throbs within me to unveil itself to its hearers.
Lo, [my] intellect rides through the heights to rise ever higher,
that it might go and see, then come back to speak about creation.
It is by reading Moses, the scribe of truth, that the mind
is enriched to speak of the wonder of creation.[9]
I hear that verse "In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth," and I am stirred to speak about it. Gen 1:1
When I was about to speak about creatures and their comeliness,
about their adornment and the beauty of their formation,
my mind drew me wildly along in its haste,

[7] The love and wonder required for seeking and speaking of God is an important theme in Jacob, as it was for both Ephrem and Narsai; see, for example, Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, I.2, and Narsai, *Homily on Creation*, II.54–55, 70, 169–172.

[8] Again, Jacob follows the lead of Ephrem. For the mind's place in theological inquiry, see further, below, and Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, especially, I.3–4, V.4, VI.2, 25, XV.6.

[9] For Ephrem too, Moses is the master teacher on the subject of creation, see Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, I.1. For Jacob, he is the source of prophecy as well as the great teacher of creation; see, for example, P. Bedjan, *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis*, III.44, 46, 79.

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ⵎⵏⵍⵍ ⵣⵜⵎⵎⵔ ⵎⵏⵍⵍ ⵇⵍⵉⵛⵉⵍⴰ ⵢⵣⵓⵎⵎⵉⵔⵏ⵽
ⵜⵎⵎⵜ ⵔⵔⴰⵎ ⵛⵏ ⵎⵎⵔⵎⵓⵜⴰ ⵜⵏⵎⵎⵓⵔⵉⵍⴰ:

and like a rash man I went out beyond the sphere of this earth.
I then began to reflect, "Before this action that occurred,
what was there?" for it is not written that there was nothing.
Before that signal[10] which established the ages from nothing,
what did a place devoid of any creature look like?
Before there was either light or darkness,
what color was that light of Existence[11]?
What did that place look like before the world existed?
Now that it does exist, does it occupy a place that was not its?

[10] Syriac, *remzâ*. The term is very important for Jacob, particularly in this long verse homily on the *Hexaemeron*; it is already found in the hymns of Ephrem, and is also an important term in the homilies of Jacob's contemporary Narsai; for the latter, see P. Gignoux, *Homélies de Narsaï sur la création* (PO 34.3–4; Turnhout: Brepols, 1968), 23. *Remzâ* normally means "sign, gesture, nod," but is nearly impossible to translate in these contexts, as already noted by Kh. Alwan, "Le 'remzo' selon la pensée de Jacques de Saroug," *PdO* 15 (1988–1989), 91–106. I have chosen to use the English word 'signal' as it is ambiguous enough not necessarily to indicate a physical gesture on the part of God as "nod" or "gesture" would. Nonetheless, the precise meaning remains impossible to translate into English.

[11] Syr., *'îtûtâ*. This word and its cognates, which I have indicated thoughout in the footnotes, is a term of extreme importance for early Syriac theology. Meaning 'being' or 'existence' it always refers to God—the Being, except by Bardaisan against whom Ephrem wrote so much. While this particular polemic is absent from Jacob, he nonetheless is intent on driving home the point that it is only God who is "Being, or Existent One." I have tried to translate *'îtûtâ* consistently as "Existence" (though, as here, "Being" would sometimes serve), and *'îtyâ* as "Self-Existent One."

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Before the "tohu" and the "bohu," the waste and the great emptiness,[12]
what did that nothing look like—if it was even like [anything]?
There was no heaven, no earth, no seas,
no firmament, no luminaries, no elements;
there was no light, no darkness, and no shadow,
nothing that rose, nothing that set;
there was no fire, no wind, and no angels,
no legions, none that were hidden, none that were yoked;[13]
there was no chariot, no rational wheels,[14]
no cherubim, no winged ones, nor any other such being;
none to say "holy," none to say "glory," none to serve, Isa6:3; Rev 4:8–10
there were no seraphim, no ranks of heavenly hosts.
On that place, before that impetus[15] that was to bring something into being,

[12] Genesis 1:2. Jacob again follows Ephrem by explaining the biblical terms *tôhû* and *bôhû*, as *šehyâ* and *śedyâ*, against Narsai and others who follow Basil and the Greek tradition in interpreting them as "invisible" and "unfinished"; Narsai, *Homilies on Creation*, III.17, see also T. Jansma, "Investigations into the Early Syrian Fathers on Genesis," *OtSt* 12 (1958), 102–103, and A. Guillaumont, "Genèse 1, 1–2 selon les commentateurs syriaques," in *Il Principio* (Paris: Centre d'études des Religions du Livre, 1973), 124–125.

[13] All these terms refer to the 'heavenly hosts' or angels, although the term I translate as 'yoked' (Syr., *kĕdînîn*) does not appear in the Bible; it presumably stems from the depiction in Ezekiel 1:17–21, where the 'living creatures' all move in unison.

[14] This expression, "rational wheels" (literally, "speaking wheels," occurs three times in this *mêmrâ*, here and lines 182, 311; it is also found in other of Jacob's *mêmrê*, see, for example, T. Kollamparampil, *Jacob of Sarug's Homily on Palm Sunday* (TFCLA, 5; Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2008), p. 8, l. 33. While its roots are certainly to be found in Ezekiel's description of the chariot (see Ezekiel 1:15–21, 10:9–17), the precise phrase is not used there. Jacob seems to be deducing that the entire description is of a living thing, therefore the wheels too are rational or can speak.

[15] Syr., *zaw'â*. This term, whose root means to 'move' or 'shake,' is another important term for Jacob, referring to the initial 'movement' that God made toward the creation of the world.

ⵎⵢⵎ ⵜⵜⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵜⵜⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵉⵎⵓⵔⵔⵉ

I gazed, I roamed, and I marveled, I fixed my eye, and I stood.
My mind became rash and it remained there like a shameless one,
and the waves of the splendor of the Divinity began to drown it.
For the Exalted One dwells in that palace illumined by His Existence,[16]
and He is glorious, honorable, holy, awesome, and full of goodness.
He has no use for ministers, no use for ministry,
nor for any to bear Him as He has no need to ride on anything yoked.
But a great place was made for Him and He dwelt there,
rejoicing and delighting in His own Essence[17];
He is Himself holy by the gentle hovering[18] of His holiness,
for His nature is full of natural blessings;
He is held in honor by the wheels of His glorious Divinity,
and there was no need for Him to create even a single creature.

III. THE INDESCRIBABLE GOODNESS OF GOD

The great Self-Existent One[19] is exalted by His Existence,[20]
He dwells in Himself, there is no place that is not full of Him.
And Mercy, which is naturally in Him, rises up in Him
to bring forth creation though He has no need of creatures.

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[16] Syr., *'îtûtâ*.

[17] Here the Syriac word is *yat*, from the same root as *'îtyâ* and *'îtûtâ*; this is the only time this particular word is used in this verse homily.

[18] Syr., *rûḥafâ*; this word is from the same root as the word used in Genesis 1:2, of the Spirit "hovering (Syr. *mraḥfâ*)" over the waters.

[19] Syr., *'îtyâ*.

[20] Syr., *'îtûtâ*.

ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܚܟܡܬ ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܫ ܠܐ ܢܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ׃
ܗܘ ܡܪܒܐ ܕܥܒܕ ܠܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܫ ܕܥܡܗ ܐܝܟ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ׃
ܗܘ ܕܡܫܟܚ ܠܐ ܝܕܥ ܐܢܫ ܕܥܡܗ ܐܝܟ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ׃
ܒܗܢ ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܐܫܬܘܕܥ ܠܟ ܘܐܡܪ ܠܟ ׃
ܕܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃ 90
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃ 6
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃ 95
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃
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ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃ 100
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃
ܘܐܦ ܐܢ ܐܬ ܒܚܙܘܬܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܡܫܬܟܚ ܠܗ ׃
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He does not seek to fill any need of His own by means of the world that He created,
but because He is good He created creatures.
He came down to create all sorts of creatures in their forms,
and it is clear that had He not lowered Himself He would not have created.
Why would He create if He had no need except because
of that Goodness which is beyond words to describe.
For by Goodness the world was built so that it would be
—alongside [His] Existence—,[21] something that came into existence from nothing.
When the [heavenly] hosts were made, He would unite them
with Him in glory and they would delight in serving Him.
Because He found Himself alone, He brought forth assemblies
of those who give Him glory to unite them to Him in great glory,
and to raise up companies of ministers to minister to Him,
and to clothe them with the splendor and honor from His magnificence. Cf. Luke 12:28, and parallels
In order that His Self-Existence[22] not be the only one to delight in His Existence,[23]
He signaled in order to establish the hosts to serve Him,
so that, while He is being praised, those who praise Him might grow as a result of Him,
and while He is being honored, He might multiply blessings for those who honor Him.

[21] Syr., *'îtûtâ*.
[22] Syr., *'îtyâ*.
[23] Syr., *'îtûtâ*.

ܟ ܫܡܫܐ ܕܐ ܒܥܠ ܕܐܒܐ ܒܪܗ:
ܠ ܫܠ ܐܢ ܐܡܪ ܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܒܪ
ܫܢ ܒܪܐ ܕܐ ܒܪ ܐܢ ܒܪ ܐܢ ܒܪ
ܡ ܐܡܪ ܠ ܐܢ ܐ ܐ ܐ

And in that sweetness of His Existence[24] the mighty hosts
graze as if they were in meadows of every good thing.
And Adam will be the great image, like a god, Gen 1:26
and all creatures will be like handmaids, obedient to Him.
And in this way the Goodness of the Divinity will have increased,
that out of nothing there would be something like a god.
If it were an easy thing for something that was made to become a god,
He would not be envious to have companions beside Him.
For this reason, although there was no necessity, He created creatures,
and He exalted them with Himself by the beauty of their natures.

IV. GOD CREATES THE WORLD FROM NOTHING

Moses set it down at that highest point of prophecy,[25]
and he saw that [God] had come down to bring forth a creation as yet uncreated.
There came that first impetus[26] from the Self-Existent One,[27]
and the signal went out and made nothing into something.
It was at this point that Moses began to speak:
"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Gen 1:1
From that signal and thereafter that scribe began to write down
what came to be during the six days of creation.
In prophecy, the high point of observation, he saw that Hidden One

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[24] Syr., *'îtûtâ*.
[25] That is, at the beginning, in Gen 1:1, the very first verse of the entire Bible.
[26] Syr., *zaw'â*. See n. 15, above.
[27] Syr., *'îtûtâ*.

ܐܚܕܘܗܝ ܗܘ ܒܐܠܗܐ ܕܐܒܝ ܒܫܡܝܐ:
ܣܬܟܠܐ ܐܡ ܒܚܬܪܐ ܒܠܐ ܫܘܠܛܢܐ:
ܕܐܝܟ ܐܝܟ ܕܚܝ ܘܟܐ ܐܡ ܟܬܒܐ:
ܒܠܐ ܚܬܡܐ ܐܡ ܐܬܪܐ ܒܡܠܟܘܬܟ ܟܐ׃
ܕܐܝ ܡܢ ܫܡܝܐ ܗܘ ܫܡܥܐ ܒܟܬܒܐ: 125
ܒܟ ܠܐ ܢܒܝܡ ܢܐ ܢܒܝ ܐܡ ܟܬܒܐ׃
ܐܟܐ ܕܐܢ ܢܐ ܒܟ ܒܚܒ ܢܐ ܟܬܒ:
ܠܐ ܣܡܟ ܗܘ ܐܠܐ ܒܣܬܝܩ ܢܐ ܕܐ׃
ܡܟܐ ܗܘ ܒ ܠܐ ܗܢܡ ܗܘ ܙܐ ܚܬܡܐ:
ܐ ܒܢ ܐܝ ܙܒ ܚܒܐ ܕܐ ܒܫܬܐ׃ 130
ܟܐ ܗܘ ܢܡܐ ܒܫܬܐ ܗܡ ܗܘ ܫܐ:
ܐ ܣܡܗ ܒܢܐ ܙܢܐ ܙܢܐ ܐܠܐ ܙܢܐ ܗܘ׃ 8
ܐ ܗܘܐ ܒܐ ܫܒܡܐ ܟܐ ܒܡܐ:
ܐ ܒܟܫ ܢܐ ܟܬܒ ܢܐ ܒܟ׃
ܗܐ ܐ ܫܐ ܟܫ ܫܐ ܟܫܟܟ: 135
ܟܗ ܒܙܢܟܡ ܙܐ ܟܬܐ ܟܫܐ׃
ܐ ܒܙܢ ܐ ܟܬܐ ܫܐ ܟܫ:
ܒܟ ܒܐ ܙܐ ܟܡܐ ܙܐ ܐ׃
ܙܫܟܬܐ ܢܫ ܐ ܐ ܒܐ ܟܬ:

Who called forth nothing which then rose up and became something.[28]
Both signals and voices that served on behalf of creation,
Moses heard and saw by the light of prophecy.
Like a steward he entered the treasury of Divinity,
and the riches of the act of creation were not concealed from him.
Like one who sees and like one who hears in a high place,
the scribe set it down in his book that announced the creation.
He said, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," Gen 1:1
thus showing that the world has a beginning and a starting point.
The teaching that was full of light Moses brought down
from Mount Sinai to a world that had become dark with idolatry.[29] Cf. Exod 32:15–16
Although each and every creature had been made in their forms,
they were being reckoned as gods in their natures.
The world had become dark in its love of worthless images,
The creature had forgotten its Creator and He was no longer spoken of.
Some people worshipped fire, others water,
[still others worshipped] the luminaries, beasts, or birds. Cf. Rom 1:23
The world had forgotten and no one knew who its Lord was;

[28] That God created everything from nothing, *creatio ex nihilo*, and that there exists nothing apart from God that was not created from this nothing was a constant theme in early Syriac theology.

[29] Ephrem says that in primeval times there was no lack of people to preach God as creator, but from the time of the exile in Egypt to Moses, this truth had been lost, see Ephrem, *Commentary on Genesis*, Prologue 2–4.

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for this reason Moses was compelled to write about the Creator,
so that the world might perceive that it has a beginning and a starting point,
and that it has a Lord and to Him all worship is due,
and that those who had usurped the name "gods" should be exposed
as creatures, as things that had been made from nothing,
and that all worship of creatures should cease,
and that the world should worship the Creator, for He is its Lord.
Moses brought this remedy down from Mount Sinai,
to bring healing to the cancer that had infected the world.
He demonstrated that the world had no existence before it came to be,
that there was a time when the world that came to be had not existed,
that there was a beginning for all those creatures that had come to be,
that there is a Maker who is hidden from all by His invisibility,
and that this great body [made up] of every creature was completely
set into motion[30] by the power of God and had come to be from nothing.

V. GOD BRINGS INTO BEING THE HOSTS OF HEAVEN

Moses revealed to the world the mystery that had been concealed,
about how and when it had come into being[31] from nothing.

[30] Syr., *'ettzî'*, from the same root as *zaw'â*, see n. 15, above.
[31] The Syriac is literally "when it had risen into being."

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He began by writing, "In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth," for they had not been made and He made them. Gen 1:1
The Mighty One signaled, and something came to be out of nothing:
the heavens, the earth, and the hosts that were hidden above.
He made for Himself hosts of glorious beings in His high place,
and He set out the ranks that would stand at His service.[32]
He harnessed up a chariot and its entire movement was to bless [Him],
with the sounds of its wings and the movement of its rational wheels. Ezek 1:15–21
He made angels and ministers out of fire and wind, Ps 104:4
a new sight in a beautiful place for [His] great glory.
Out of fire He forged fiery seraphim with their wings,
with their voices and the undulations[33] of their cries of Holy. Isa 6:2–4
He set legions in order, both the upper and the middle ones,
as well as the lower, and for His glory He set one in charge.[34]
He made powers for Himself and He made leaders for the hosts,

[32] By putting the creation of the angels on the first day, Jacob distances himself from Ephrem who was leary of stating exactly when the angels were created, see Ephrem, *Commentary on Genesis*, I.3. Theodore of Mopsuestia, followed by Narsai, criticized Basil for placing the creation of the angels before the creation of the world, and put their creation at the same time as the heavens and the earth. An anonymous homily also places the creation of the angels on the first day, see T. Jansma, "Une homélie anonyme sur la création du monde," *OS* 5 (1960), 387. For discussion, see A. Guillaumont, "Genèse 1, 1–2 selon les commentateurs syriaques," 119–122.

[33] Syr., *rûḥafâ*; see n. 18, above.

[34] It is not clear who is meant here; might it be the traditional Lucifer who fell? or Michael who took his place? See also line 198, below.

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and He established assemblies in their places to give [Him] praise.
He made overseers, servants and those who give praise,
who bless, who sanctify, and who shout "Alleluia",
orders upon orders, assemblies upon assemblies, ranks upon ranks,
thousands without end and myriads without number,
awesome cherubim, wondrous seraphim, in distinct forms,
a wind that blows, a fire that burns, and the great wanderer[35].
And His signal established ranks of exalted ones and of lesser ones;
but then [He established] another lowly one, which is the rank that fell.
He established them, He arranged them, He roused them,
to bless, to give praise and to sing "Alleluia."
He filled their mouths with all shouts of praise and all shouts of joy
so that by nature they would sing glory at all times.
He set "Holy" into the mouth of the seraph when He created him
so that as soon as he sought to open his mouth, praise would come forth.
He made a face for him and He made wings to cover it, Isa 6:2
so that by this veil he might honor the Divinity.
For the cherub He made a mouth to produce all sorts of blessings
and, with a loud voice, to praise His name at the entrance of His place.[36]

[35] This is presumably the sun, which was once considered to be a planet. The Greek word for planet comes from the verb *planaô*, 'to wander.'

[36] This last image seems to come from Ezekiel 28:14, a pre-lapsarian vision of Genesis 3:24.

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They looked to each other and saw each other, they were astonished and trembled,
they marvelled that they came to be, but were unaware of how they came to be.
That same signal that established them now roused them
to bless and to give praise ever more abundantly.

VI. THE ANGELIC HOSTS PRAISE THEIR CREATOR

Then from that moment they began to produce all blessings and praises
as they were constituted by the signal that established them.
Each one of them marveled at its being
and was moved to give praise and never to stop giving that praise.
They did not subject themselves to asking or to seeking out,
nor to making inquiry lest they be deprived of [giving] praise.[37]
"Holy, Holy, Holy" they would cry out in awe, Isa 6:3
and they do not wish to utter anything else.
Everyone of these powers rouses the other,
while trembling, to give praise and glory.
From that first rousing when He established them
until now, they were not so sated as to cease [giving] praise.
They knew that they had come to be and because they had come to be
they were moved to give praise, and the sound of their joy was thunderous.
All at once the ranks were roused to give praise,
to bless, to give honor, and to sing "Alleluia."

[37] In an anonymous homily on creation, the heavenly hosts, when they were created, had no knowledge of God, but as soon as He spoke the words, "Let there be light," they were astonished and immediately acknowledged His awesome creative power; see T. Jansma, "Une homélie anonyme sur la création du monde," 387–388.

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And the voices of those who uttered "Holy," "Praise," or "Blessing"
thundered forth in various forms as they were constituted.
Although they had the occasion and opportunity to ask
how they now existed, they did not abase themselves by asking.
Rather, wonder constrained them to give praise,
and in that wonder they now enjoy a holy existence.
The heavenly ones stood in the temple of light that the signal had created,
and they all sang out a new hymn of glory in a loud voice.
The heavens were erected by a hidden signal and, along with them,
all their hosts as a castle for the king and the king's servants.

VII. CREATION PERFECTED IN THE HOLY TRINITY

"By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made," as it is written,
"and by the breath of His mouth their hosts," as it was said. Ps 33:6
The Lord, His Word and His Spirit—the entire Trinity!
It is clear from this that the Lord created all creatures through His Son. John 1:3; Col 1:16
The Father signals, the Son creates, and the Spirit perfects,
in this trinitarian way the world comes into existence out of nothing.
While the Trinity was delighting in the frame it constructed,
it signaled, created, and perfected the world with great power.
The heights and the sons of the heights rose up to their dwellings,
the heavens were stretched out, with heavenly beings in their niches:

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A great tent and the royal ranks were set out within it,
and a chamber of light with children of light who delighted within.
At that signal which went out soundlessly to what He had made,
the angels came into being as mighty hosts.
All those creatures that Moses did not attempt to name,
that same signal established them in their natures.
Moses, the scribe, set down bodily and corporeal creatures in his book,
but he declined to write about the invisible creation.
He did not speak about the angels who were hidden above,
nor did he set down any account of fire or spirit in what he wrote.
That Levite[38] wrote down just how this manifest world came to be,
so that through these manifest things the world might learn that it had a Lord. Cf. Rom 1:20

VIII. DAVID, EZEKIEL, AND DANIEL TELL OF THE ANGELS

What Moses left out or did not write in his account,
David filled in in his Book of Asher, [that is] of his Psalms.[39]
"He made His messengers and His ministers fire and wind," Ps 104:4
David wrote down in his beautiful psalms,
so that the world might learn that even the angels were created,
and that along with creation they came into being by the Maker.

[38] Moses was from the house of Levi; cf. Exodus 2:1–2.

[39] The Book of Asher, first mentioned in 2 Samuel 1:18 and inserted into some Hebrew manuscripts at 1 Kings 8:13, is sometimes used as a synonym for the canonical book of Psalms by Syriac authors; see R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1879, 1901), I.407.

ⵜⵎⵎⵓⵏ ⵣⵓⵏ ⵓⵔⵜⵜⴰⵔ ⵜⵎⵓⵔⵓⵏ ⵜⵏ:
250 ⵙⵙⵓⵏ ⵓⵙⵓⵔⵓ ⵓⵔⵉⵔ ⵙⵙⵓⵔⵓ ⵜⵏ ⴰ 14
ⵜⵏ ⵜⵓⴰ ⵣⵉⵔⵓ ⵣⵓⵍⵍⴰ ⵓⵍⵍⴰ ⵜⵎⵎ ⵙⵎⵓⵔⵉ:
ⵜⵏ ⵜⵜⴰⵏⵏⴰ ⵏⵉⵍ ⵙⵓⵓⵓⵔ ⵜⵜⵙⵙⵓⵍⵍⴰ ⴰ
ⵓⵜⵜ ⵜⵉⵔⵓⴰ ⵓⵍⵍ ⵜⵓⵔ ⵜⵜⵓⵓⵓⵔⵜ ⵣⵉⵏ:
ⵓⵔ ⵓⵓ ⵣⵉⵔⵓ ⵣⵎⵎ ⵣⵉⵏ ⵙⵓⵎⵎⵜⵜⵓⵎ ⴰ
255 ⵜⵜⵓⵓⵓ ⵓⵜⵜⵓ ⵜⵜⵉⵔⵉⵔⴰ ⵓⵜⵜⵓⵓⵓⵜⵜ ⵓⵎ ⵙⵜⵜⵓⵜ:
ⵓⵍⵍ ⵔⵓ ⵓⵙⵜⵜⵜ ⵙⵜⵜ ⵜⵉⵔⵓⴰ ⵓⵍⵍ ⵜⵓⵎⵎⵔⵓ ⴰ
ⵍⵍ ⵜⵜⵜⵜ ⵓⵓⴰ ⵙⵜⵜ ⵜⵜⵍⵍⴰ ⵜⵜⵏⵏⵔⴰ ⵣⵓⵜⵜⵜ:
ⵓⵍⵍ ⵓⵎ ⵓⵓⵔⵓ ⵓⵏⵜⵓⵓ ⵓⵣⵎⵓ ⵙⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜ ⴰ
ⵣⵓⵎⵓⵓ ⵓⵓⴰ ⵓⵜⵜⵓⵓ ⵜⵜⵜⵜ ⵜⵜⵜⵜ ⵓⵜⵜⵓ:
260 ⵣⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜⵓⵍ ⵏⵜⵜⵜ ⵓⵜⵜⵓⵓ ⵣⵓⵍⵜ ⵜⵜⵜ ⵓⵔⵓⵍ ⴰ
ⵓⵔⵓⵍ ⵣⵓⵜⵜ ⵜⵜⵜⵜ ⵓⵓⵔⵓ ⵜⵜⵔⵓⵓ ⵓⵍⵍ ⵍⵓⵜⵜⵜⵜ:
ⵜⵜⵜ ⵣⵓⵜⵜ ⵜⵜⵜⵜ ⵍⵓⵓⵓⵜ ⵣⵓⵜⵜⵜⵜⵍⵓ ⴰ
ⵜⵜⵜ ⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜ ⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜⵜ

Although the great Moses did not write about the angels,
David did write about them and the Spirit behind their revelations is one.
The world learned from both Moses and David
that the Self-Existent One[40] who created all creation by His signal is one.
David also made known on which day the angels came to be,
whose creation was revealed to the world: both when and how.[41]
By that very same signal by which the heavens and the earth were created
all the hosts of the heavens came into existence.
"By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made," David declared,
and right along with them "their hosts by the breath of His mouth." Ps 33:6
Moses made known that the Lord "created the heavens and the earth," Gen 1:1
and David showed how the hosts came to be.
Isaiah too, in that revelation of his prophecy,
brought to the world that awesome account of the seraphim.
He also taught us about their wings and about their crying "Holy,"
about their voices and about the covering over their faces,
of how they cry out to one another with great trembling,
and praise the Lord whose glory filled the heavens; Isa 6:2–3

[40] Syr., *'ityâ*.

[41] Jacob seems here to be understanding the following verse from Psalm 33, as referring to the first day of creation, as the word, *rûḥâ*, which means both "breath" and "spirit" occurs in both this Psalm and in Genesis 1:2; see also Psalm 104:1–4.

ᠤᠯᠠ ᠠᠯᠳᠠᠭᠳᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ ᠪᠤᠶᠤ ᠭᠡᠵᠦ ᠬᠡᠯᠡᠭᠰᠡᠨ᠂
ᠠᠯᠳᠠᠭᠳᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ ᠪᠠᠭᠰᠢ ᠶᠡᠮᠥ ᠦᠭᠡᠢ ᠪᠠᠢᠬᠤ ᠶᠢᠨ᠎ᠠ᠃
ᠭᠡᠵᠦ ᠬᠤᠳᠠᠯᠳᠠ ᠬᠡᠵᠦ ᠪᠠᠭᠲᠠᠨ᠎ᠠ ᠬᠡᠮᠦ᠂
270 ᠮᠥᠨ ᠲᠡᠭᠡᠨ ᠤᠳᠤᠭᠠ ᠪᠠᠷᠢᠵᠤ ᠬᠤᠪᠢᠯᠪᠠ᠃
15 ᠮᠣᠩᠭᠣᠯ ᠪᠢᠴᠢᠭ ᠲᠡᠮᠳᠡᠭᠯᠡᠯ ᠤᠨ ᠳᠤᠷᠮᠠᠳ᠂
ᠪᠢᠴᠢᠭᠯᠡᠯ ᠤᠨ ᠵᠠᠭᠰᠠᠯ ᠢᠶᠠᠨ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠂
ᠲᠡᠭᠡᠪᠡᠯ ᠲᠡᠭᠡᠨ ᠤ ᠨᠢᠭᠡᠨᠳᠡ ᠲᠡᠭᠡᠨ ᠤ ᠳᠤᠷᠮᠠᠳ᠂
ᠲᠡᠭᠡᠨ ᠤ ᠳᠤᠮᠳᠠ ᠬᠡᠰᠡᠭ ᠢᠶᠠᠨ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠃
275 ᠬᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ ᠤᠨ ᠵᠠᠭᠰᠠᠯ ᠳᠤᠷᠮᠠᠳ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠂
ᠰᠤᠯᠤᠩᠭᠠ ᠬᠡᠪᠲᠡᠭᠡᠯ ᠢᠶᠠᠨ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠃
ᠮᠣᠩᠭᠣᠯ ᠬᠡᠮᠵᠢᠯ ᠤᠨ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ ᠳᠤᠮᠳᠠ ᠶᠠᠪᠤᠭᠰᠠᠨ᠂
ᠮᠣᠩᠭᠣᠯ ᠪᠢᠴᠢᠭ ᠤᠨ ᠵᠠᠭᠰᠠᠯ ᠲᠡᠭᠡᠨ ᠲᠤ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠃
ᠠᠭ ᠤᠳᠤᠰᠤ ᠬᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤ ᠪᠣᠭᠣᠳᠠᠯ ᠢᠶᠠᠨ᠎ᠠ᠂
280 ᠠᠯᠳᠠᠷ ᠬᠦᠷᠡᠭᠡᠳᠦ ᠬᠣᠯᠤᠭᠠᠳᠤ ᠪᠤᠰᠤᠯᠤᠭᠳᠠᠵᠤ᠃
ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠ ᠭᠠ ᠠᠷᠪᠠ ᠨᠢᠭᠡ ᠤᠨ ᠬᠡᠪᠲᠡᠭᠡᠯ᠂
ᠮᠥᠨ ᠮᠥᠨᠬᠡᠨ᠂ ᠮᠥᠨ ᠠᠮᠢᠳᠤᠯᠳᠤ ᠪᠡᠷᠬᠡᠨ᠎ᠡ᠃
ᠲᠡᠭᠡᠪᠡᠯ ᠲᠡᠨᠳᠡ ᠪᠤᠯ ᠬᠡᠪᠲᠡᠭᠡᠯ ᠲᠡᠢ ᠳᠤᠷᠠᠯ᠂
ᠪᠢᠴᠢᠭᠯᠡᠯ ᠳᠡᠭᠡᠷ ᠬᠡᠮᠵᠢᠯ ᠲᠡᠢ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠃

of how the Trinity is proclaimed by their voices,[42]
and how even the thresholds shake at their reverberations;[43]
and of how the mystery of the body and blood is ministered by them,
which in fear they were carrying in the tongs of fire.[44] Isa 6:6–7
The great Moses did not write about those things,
for the lot fell to Isaiah to speak about them.

IX. THE PROPHETS WITNESS TO THE HEAVENLY BEINGS

Because every spirit of prophecy is one,
the Lord gave it in portions to those who were worthy of it.
The prophets became sons of the mystery for the Divinity,
Who divided up all the revelations as It saw fit.
Each one of them, according to the gift that was given him,
revealed to the world about the Creator and about creation.
Since one could only speak in a small way about the accounts of the Divinity,
the Spirit sang and declared what was hidden through them all.
Moses wrote down about the silent creation,[45]
while David sang about the legions that spoke. Pss 103:20, 148:2
Then Isaiah, concerning that appearance of the seraphim,

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[42] By the three "holy"s that they uttered in Isaiah 6:3.

[43] That is, at the voices of the seraphim. The Syriac word for "reverberations" is *rûḥāfâ* (see n. 18, above) but Isaiah 6:4 actually says that it was the voice of God, not that of the seraphim, that shook the thresholds.

[44] The 'burning coal' that the angel brought to Isaiah from the altar was frequently used, as it clearly is here, throughout early Christian literature as a symbol or type of the consecrated Eucharist.

[45] In the creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2, no creature utters a word, only God Himself.

ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܠܐܟ ܡܪܝ ܠܐ ܬܫܬܘܩ: 285
ܗܐ ܐܢܐ ܫܕܪ ܐܟ ܐܚܕ ܕܒܝܬ ܡܨܪܝܡ ܘ
ܘܐܡܪ ܐܠ ܬܩܪܒ ܗܢܐ ܢܥܠ ܪܓܠܝܟ ܘܗܘ:
ܗܐ ܐܢܐ ܫܕܪ ܐܟ ܕܒܝܬ ܐܒܝ ܘܐܡܐ ܘ
ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܠܐܟ ܡܪܝ ܠܐ ܬܫܬܘܩ ܒܗ ܒܫܠܡ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠ ܬܩܪܒ ܗܢܐ ܢܥܠ ܪܓܠܝܟ ܘ 16
ܗܘ ܐܢܐ ܫܕܪ ܐܟ ܕܒܝܬ ܐܒܝ ܘܐܡܐ ܘ 290
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ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠ ܬܩܪܒ ܗܢܐ ܢܥܠ ܪܓܠܝܟ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܢܐ ܫܕܪ ܐܟ ܕܒܝܬ ܐܒܝ ܘܐܡܐ ܘ
ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܠܐܟ ܡܪܝ ܠܐ ܬܫܬܘܩ ܒܗ ܒܫܠܡ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠ ܬܩܪܒ ܗܢܐ ܢܥܠ ܪܓܠܝܟ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܢܐ ܫܕܪ ܐܟ ܕܒܝܬ ܐܒܝ ܘܐܡܐ ܘ
ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܠܐܟ ܡܪܝ ܠܐ ܬܫܬܘܩ ܒܗ ܒܫܠܡ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠ ܬܩܪܒ ܗܢܐ ܢܥܠ ܪܓܠܝܟ ܘ
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ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܠܐܟ ܡܪܝ ܠܐ ܬܫܬܘܩ ܒܗ ܒܫܠܡ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠ ܬܩܪܒ ܗܢܐ ܢܥܠ ܪܓܠܝܟ ܘ
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ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܠܐܟ ܡܪܝ ܠܐ ܬܫܬܘܩ ܒܗ ܒܫܠܡ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠ ܬܩܪܒ ܗܢܐ ܢܥܠ ܪܓܠܝܟ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܢܐ ܫܕܪ ܐܟ ܕܒܝܬ ܐܒܝ ܘܐܡܐ ܘ 300
ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܡܠܐܟ ܡܪܝ ܠܐ ܬܫܬܘܩ ܒܗ ܒܫܠܡ ܘ
ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠ ܬܩܪܒ ܗܢܐ ܢܥܠ ܪܓܠܝܟ ܘ

told the world how they exist in order to give praise. Isa 6:3
To Ezekiel it fell by lot that he be the one to speak
about that chariot of the cherubim that was filled with wonder, Cf. Ezek 1:15–21
for neither Moses nor Isaiah had spoken about it;
the prophet who was full of wondrous revelations spoke of this.
For he ate the scroll that was full of the mysteries of creation, Ezek 3:1–3
and spit out a description at which minds are struck dumb trying to comprehend.
He told about the chariot and its various facets,
about the forms and the appearances that were part of it,
about the faces and the wings and the rational wheels,
and the living Spirit that was moving inside the wheels; Ezek 1:20–21
about the trembling as well as that service of the cherubim,
and about the high throne that was constructed over them; Ezek 1:22–25
about that vision of the image of the Son of God
which was borne on the chariot with great wonder; Ezek 1:26–28
and about the sound of that service that is proper to the cherubim,
who, with great trembling, bless that High One in His place. Cf. Ezek 10:19
The world learned all these things about the chariot,
so awesome to behold, from Ezekiel, the son of captivity. Cf. Ezek 1:1
Neither Moses nor David revealed its story,
nor did any other prophet speak of it as did Ezekiel.
To him [alone] was given that gift of revealing it,
to speak so wondrously about that chariot of the cherubim.
It fell to Daniel to declare about the assemblies,
about the companies and about the ministry of the heavenly beings:

ᠮᠥᠨ ᠵᠦᠪᠬᠡᠨ ᠤᠯᠠᠭ ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠴᠡᠭᠡᠭᠡᠳ᠃
ᠵᠦᠷᠭᠡᠮᠯᠦ ᠲᠦ ᠮᠣᠩᠭᠣᠯ ᠬᠡᠯ ᠤᠯᠠ ᠪᠤᠶ ᠭᠠᠷᠭᠠᠵᠤ᠃
ᠵᠠᠯ ᠪᠠᠨᠳᠢᠳᠤᠯ ᠤᠨ ᠲᠥᠷᠥᠯ ᠤᠨ ᠵᠠᠰᠠᠭ᠃
ᠤᠯᠤᠭ ᠬᠣᠭᠣᠯᠠᠢ ᠣᠯᠠᠨ ᠠᠮᠢᠲᠠᠨ ᠪᠠᠭᠲᠠᠵᠤ᠃ 305
ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠ ᠵᠣᠭᠰᠣᠭᠤ ᠳᠤᠷᠠᠳᠤ ᠰᠠᠭᠤᠷᠢ ᠴᠢᠮᠡᠭᠲᠦ᠃
ᠤᠯᠠᠭ ᠳᠤᠷᠠ ᠡᠮᠡᠭᠲᠡᠢ ᠬᠤᠪᠢᠯᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤ᠋ ᠪᠠᠶᠠᠨ᠃
ᠣᠷᠣᠨ ᠳᠤ ᠰᠠᠭᠤᠷᠢ ᠪᠤᠶᠤ ᠰᠠᠭᠤᠷᠢ ᠳᠤ ᠪᠠᠶᠠᠨ᠃
ᠠᠭᠤ ᠠᠯᠢᠨ ᠤ᠋ ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤᠨ ᠬᠣᠷᠢᠶᠠᠨ᠃ 17
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ᠪᠣᠯᠪᠠ ᠠᠴᠠ ᠮᠣᠩᠭᠣᠯ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ ᠲᠤᠭᠠᠯᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ᠃
ᠣᠨᠳᠤᠰ ᠰᠠᠭᠤᠷᠢ ᠪᠤᠶᠤ ᠮᠣᠩᠭᠣᠯ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ ᠲᠤᠭᠠᠯᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ᠃
ᠪᠣᠯᠪᠠ ᠠᠴᠠ ᠠᠭᠤ ᠠᠯᠢᠨ ᠤ᠋ ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤᠨ ᠬᠣᠷᠢᠶᠠᠨ᠃
ᠪᠣᠯᠪᠠ ᠭᠣᠶᠤᠮᠰᠤ ᠤᠭᠠ ᠪᠠᠯᠭᠠᠰ ᠲᠤ ᠰᠤᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠃
ᠪᠣᠯᠪᠠ ᠰᠠᠭᠤᠷᠢ ᠪᠣᠯ ᠪᠥᠭᠡᠯᠡᠨ ᠳᠤ ᠬᠥᠭᠡᠭᠡᠨ᠃ 315
ᠪᠡᠷᠦᠰᠦ ᠪᠤᠯ ᠲᠤ ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠳᠠᠭᠤᠯᠤᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠃
ᠪᠣᠯᠪᠠ ᠮᠣᠩᠭᠣᠯ ᠤᠮᠤ ᠠᠮᠢᠳᠤᠯ ᠤᠨ ᠬᠥᠭᠵᠢᠮ᠃
ᠬᠡᠭᠦᠭᠡᠨ ᠳᠤ ᠬᠤᠪᠢᠯᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤ᠋ ᠬᠤᠯᠤᠭᠠᠨ ᠳᠤ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠵᠤ᠃
ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠ ᠳᠤᠯᠤᠭᠠᠨ ᠳᠤ ᠰᠤᠭᠤᠯᠤᠭᠴᠢ ᠲᠤ ᠬᠥᠭᠵᠢᠮ᠃
ᠮᠥᠨ ᠬᠡᠯᠡᠨ ᠤ᠋ ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤᠨ ᠬᠣᠷᠢᠶᠠᠨ᠃ 320
ᠤᠯᠤᠭ ᠳᠤᠷᠠ ᠡᠮᠡᠭᠲᠡᠢ ᠠᠯᠤᠭ ᠣᠯᠠᠨ ᠠᠮᠢᠲᠠᠨ᠃
ᠠᠯᠤᠭ ᠪᠤᠯᠠ ᠰᠡᠭᠦᠯ ᠵᠣᠭᠰᠣᠭᠤ ᠠᠯᠤᠭ ᠣᠷᠣᠨ᠃
ᠠᠯᠤᠭ ᠪᠤᠯᠠ ᠰᠡᠭᠦᠯ ᠵᠣᠭᠰᠣᠭᠤ ᠠᠮᠤ ᠰᠤᠭᠤᠯᠵᠤ᠃
ᠴᠠᠭ ᠠᠮᠢᠳᠠᠳ ᠤᠮᠤ ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤ᠋ ᠬᠡᠯᠡᠨ᠃
ᠮᠥᠨ ᠳᠤᠷᠠ ᠡᠮᠡᠭᠲᠡᠢ ᠬᠤᠪᠢᠯᠠᠭᠠᠨ ᠤ᠋ ᠪᠠᠶᠠᠨ᠃
ᠣᠴᠢᠷᠰᠠᠯ ᠠᠭᠤᠷ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ ᠲᠤ ᠪᠤᠯᠤᠭᠰᠠᠨ᠃ 325
ᠮᠥᠨ ᠬᠡᠲᠦᠷᠬᠡᠢ ᠮᠥᠨ ᠠᠮᠢᠳᠠᠳ ᠤᠨ ᠵᠠᠰᠠᠭ᠃

that in His place thousands of thousands serve Him who is Self-Existent,[46]
and that myriads of myriads stand before Him in reverence. Dan 7:10
In his prophecy, Daniel made known to us,
by name, both Gabriel[a] and Michael.[b]

[a] Dan 8:16, 9:21
[b] Dan 10:13, 21, 12:1

that they rule even over kings and their principalities,
and at the command of their Lord they perform mighty deeds. Dan 8–12

X. ALL SCRIPTURE TESTIFIES THAT GOD IS CREATOR

Moses concealed the entire account of the [heavenly] hosts,
not wishing to say anything about the angels.
He did not even speak of whether they came to be or if they exist,
he left the rest of this for his fellow[-prophets] to speak about.
Moses was not compelled to speak about [all] creation,
[only] to demonstrate to the entire world that there was a Creator.
He was aware that, in his prophecy, he had companions,
and whatever he left out would be spoken of by his fellow[-prophets].
To Joshua, son of Nun, the disciple of that distinguished teacher, Josh 1:1
it was revealed that there were captains of the host.
He saw an angel in the valley with a sword clasped in his hand
who said to him, "I am the captain of the host." Josh 5:13–14
This account of the captains of the powers and of the hosts

[46] Syr., *'îtyâ*.

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ܘܡܫܬ ܡܘܫܐ ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܒ ܚܕ ܒܫܟ ܀
ܘܐܠ ܐܬܝܢ ܐܠ ܐܠ ܡܫܠܐ ܕܡܫܬܘܢ ܒܐ:
330 ܗܘ ܝܢܐ ܐܡ ܫܘ ܟ ܕܡܬܘܗ ܀ 18
ܘܡܟܠܡ ܐ ܠ ܡܚܬܐ ܗܝܡ ܒܐ ܡܫܬܘܢ:
ܘܚܦܡܝ ܗܘ ܡܢ ܡܫܬ ܐܠ ܡܫ ܀
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was not spoken of in that account of the [first] six days.
Only about those corporeal, solid, and visible things
did Moses record how they came to be from nothing.
When Moses was designated to make a record about the creation,
every creature was being worshipped by mankind. Cf. Rom 1:23
The world did not know that it had a Lord, hidden,
so Moses demonstrated that there was a Creator of all hidden things.
And when he said, "The Lord created the heavens and the earth," Gen 1:1
he included everything that is in the heavens and on the earth:
wind, fire, even angels and hosts,
and all creatures that are invisible by nature.
By "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," Gen 1:1
Moses included every account of all creation.
After him came the prophets, they spoke of what was revealed to them,
they revealed the creation of all those creatures that Moses had concealed.
Because the Spirit is one, all the seers drank from it,
and the truth is one that was spoken in their revelations.
Then the signal of the Divinity went out over nothing,
and it made it a great something that came into existence, into being, and is:
the heavens and the earth as well as the angels and the hosts,
the great deep as well as the darkness that was above it,
fire and water, earth and air: and the signal fashioned these four
so that the entire world would come to be from them.
These are the contrary elements and they were mixed in,

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ܒܝ ܐܝܟ ܫܡܥ ܘܐܡܪ ܐܡܪ ܟܬܒ ܐܝܟ:
350 ܟܠ ܟܬܒ ܫܡܥ ܐܡܪ ܘܢܒܝ ܗܟ ܐܬܐ ܀ 19
ܐܠ ܒܪ ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܐܡܪ ܘܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܫܡܥ:
ܡܫܐ ܫܡܥ ܘܐܡܪ ܐܡܪ ܘܟܠ ܩܒܠ ܀
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355 ܘܡܐ ܐܬܘ ܐܟ ܐܠܐ ܡܬܟܐ: ܀
ܟܠ ܟܬܒ ܐܠ ܫܡܪ ܩܡܬ ܀
ܐܡܪ ܘܐܡܪ ܐܡܪ ܐܟ ܐܡܪ ܐܝܟ:
ܫܡ ܫܡܥ ܩܡܐ ܐܬܐ ܘܐܡܪ ܀
ܐܝܐ ܩܡܘ ܒܬ ܡܟ ܩܡܬ:
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one with another, until they were separated into their borders.
For this reason the earth was unformed and desolate,
it was still entirely waste and void. Gen 1:2
Fire was mixed with the wind, and the earth was set into the water,
the world that was coming to be, though not yet fashioned, was unformed and in disarray.

XI. GOD CREATED THE WORLD IN SIX DAYS

Even a woodsman cuts wood from within a forest,
and from that he makes beautiful things.
A painter too first arranges his colors and pigments,
and after that begins to paint a lovely picture.
So too did God "cut" the world out of nothing,
to begin from that and, without toil, to establish creation.
And with one signal He created a world with nothing fashioned in it,
then in six days He established and set in order what He had fashioned.
It was not that God's might was lacking that He prolonged the time,
so that it took six days for all of creation to be perfected.
Rather, what creation needed was an orderly arrangement,
so that by being created one thing at a time it might be prepared properly.
These preparations necessitated such patient deliberateness,
so that each creation might provide an occasion for its companion to be made.
Night was in need of day when they were set in their order,
so that each one of them might appropriate the time alotted to it.
Twenty-four hours were alotted to these two brothers,
for from each of them twelve hours would be required.

ⵓⵏⵜ ⵜⵓⵏⵜ ⵖⵔ ⵜⵎⴰⵔⵔⴰⵜ ⵜⵉⵎⵣⵉⵖⵜ ⴰⵎⵓⵔⵔⴰⵙ ⵙ ⵜⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ
ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ ⵜⵉⵎⵣⵉⵖⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ
ⵜⵉⵎⵣⵉⵖⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ ⵜⵉⵎⵣⵉⵖ

For this reason [God] was patient when He created,
so that each might appropriate what belongs to it and then defer.
Thus it was necessary that the making of [the world] take six days,
for the sake of the orderly arrangement of all the days and nights.
It would have been a simple thing for the Creator, by one signal, to establish
myriads of worlds if He had wished to create them.
He did not create as many creatures as He could have when He created,
but rather [only] as many as were able to receive [creation].
So that the things made might yield place to each other,
and that nothing made would keep back its companion when it came to be.
If evening had immediately come forth when the dawn arose,
there would have been no place for either light or day.
And if night were to have risen along with day,
that course of the heavenly hosts would have been all confused.
On this account the making [of everything] required some patience,
because the progression of this course is full of intervals;
every moment was coming one after the other,
in an arranged, ordered circuit that was moving without confusion,
lest the day come against the night and put it to shame,
and lest the night seize the color from the day;
so that there be some space between the evening and the dawn that follows,
so that the day remain unimpeded in all its brightness,
and so that the night keep possession of all its dark hours,

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ᠡᠨᠡ ᠮᠡᠳᠡ ᠪᠤᠷᠤᠭᠤ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠵᠤ ᠪᠠᠢᠭᠠᠯᠢ ᠰᠡᠳᠭᠡᠯ ᠤᠨ ᠵᠠᠪᠠᠭᠠᠨ᠄ 395
ᠬᠠᠯᠠᠭᠠᠯᠠ ᠬᠤᠪᠢᠭᠠᠨ ᠳᠤ ᠠᠮᠤᠷᠢᠯᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ ᠪᠠᠢᠭᠠᠯᠢ᠃
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ᠪᠠᠭᠠ ᠠᠭᠤᠯᠠ ᠪᠤᠶᠤ ᠬᠠᠭᠤᠯᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ ᠳᠤ᠄
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ᠬᠠᠯᠠᠭᠠᠯᠠ ᠪᠠᠷᠠᠭ ᠨᠢᠭᠡ ᠭᠠᠮᠢᠶᠠ ᠪᠤ ᠪᠢᠳᠡ ᠶᠠᠪᠤᠭᠰᠠᠨ᠃
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ᠬᠤᠭᠤᠷᠴᠢᠨ ᠤ ᠪᠠᠶᠠᠨ ᠪᠠ ᠬᠤᠭᠤᠷᠴᠢᠨ ᠪᠠ᠃ 410
ᠬᠠᠯᠠᠭᠠᠯᠠ ᠪᠠᠷᠠᠭ ᠨᠢᠭᠡ ᠭᠠᠮᠢᠶᠠ ᠪᠤ ᠪᠢᠳᠡ ᠶᠠᠪᠤᠭᠰᠠᠨ᠃
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ᠡᠨᠡ ᠮᠡᠳᠡ ᠪᠤᠷᠤᠭᠤ ᠪᠠᠶᠢᠵᠤ ᠪᠠᠢᠭᠠᠯᠢ ᠰᠡᠳᠭᠡᠯ ᠤᠨ ᠵᠠᠪᠠᠭᠠᠨ᠄
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and that the brightness and radiance of the day not enter into it.
And so that all the days and the nights run their courses
along their own paths within their own limits in their own times,
and so that no color of one be mingled with a color of another,
or that any course or circuit be corrupted by changes.
For this reason [there was] a first day and then a second day,
as well as a third, then a fourth, and then a fifth,
and a sixth day on which were completed all that was fashioned,
then there was the seventh day, [a day of] rest from creation.

XII. THE CREATION OF DARKNESS AND WIND

By [God's] signal[47] all creation came into existence when it was created,
and in six days it put on the beauty of everything that was fashioned.
From the elements that came into being by that signal,
the world was adorned with beautiful and gorgeous things:
the great deep together with the earth, though it was not yet prepared,
as well as the darkness from the shade in the place of night.
The deep moved and it brought clouds out of it and set them as cover,
and they filled the place of night which was to come over creation.[48]
Likewise, David thus spoke in his Psalms:
"He set the darkness as His protection, and surrounded it with the shade." Ps 18:11

[47] Syriac, *remzâ*, see n. 10, above.

[48] That it was the deep that brought forth the clouds was also the teaching of Ephrem; see his *Commentary on Genesis*, I.5.2.

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425 ᠬᠡᠷᠪᠡ ᠣᠷᠣᠭᠰᠠᠨ ᠭᠠᠵᠠᠷ ᠳᠤ ᠪᠣᠯᠵᠣᠬᠤ᠃
ᠮᠥᠨ ᠲᠡᠭᠡᠭᠡᠳᠡ ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠᠯᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ ᠴᠣᠭ ᠪᠣᠯ ᠠᠴᠠᠭᠠᠨ᠂
ᠳᠡᠭᠡᠭᠡᠳᠡ ᠠᠪᠴᠢᠷᠠᠯ ᠤᠷᠢᠳᠴᠢᠯᠠᠨ ᠪᠠᠢᠵᠤ ᠪᠣᠯᠬᠤ᠃
ᠠᠭᠤ ᠪᠠᠭᠴᠠᠯᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ ᠴᠣᠭ ᠪᠣᠯ ᠠᠴᠠᠭᠠᠨ᠂
23 ᠳᠡᠭᠡᠭᠡᠳᠡ ᠠᠪᠴᠢᠷᠠᠯ ᠤᠷᠢᠳᠴᠢᠯᠠᠨ ᠪᠠᠢᠵᠤ ᠪᠣᠯᠬᠤ᠃
430 ᠠᠭᠤ ᠰᠡᠭᠡᠭᠡᠳᠡ ᠬᠦᠷᠡᠯᠴᠡᠬᠦ ᠪᠣᠯ ᠬᠥᠯᠥᠨ᠂
ᠪᠤ ᠪᠤᠶᠤ ᠳᠡᠭᠡᠭᠡᠳᠡ ᠪᠠᠢᠭᠠᠭᠰᠠᠨ ᠬᠦᠨ ᠪᠦᠷ ᠪᠣᠯᠪᠠᠯ᠂
ᠪᠠᠶᠠᠨ ᠭᠠᠵᠠᠷ ᠳᠤ ᠪᠠᠢᠬᠤ ᠬᠦᠷᠡᠯᠴᠡᠬᠦ ᠪᠣᠯ᠂
ᠠᠮᠢ ᠤᠨᠳᠠ ᠭᠡᠵᠦ ᠪᠣᠯ ᠪᠣᠯᠵᠣᠬᠤ ᠪᠠᠢᠨᠠ᠃
ᠡᠭᠡᠮ ᠰᠡᠭᠡᠭᠡᠳᠡ ᠬᠦᠷᠡᠯᠴᠡᠬᠦ ᠮᠥᠨ ᠪᠣᠯ ᠬᠥᠯᠥᠨ᠃

That "darkness of the waters" which came to be came from the clouds,
for they were providing cover and beneath them was the shade.
There was darkness and a wind was blowing above the waters,
a created wind, not the Holy [Spirit] as has been thought.[49]
Moses called it the "wind of the Lord" as if to say
that a creation of the Lord was hovering over His creation.
There was the deep and there rose out of it clouds of air,
and from them came that "darkness of the waters" that came to be.[50]
At the command of the Divinity the wind blew,
in order to separate and to fashion the things that came to be,
just like the Red Sea when He divided it by the hands of Moses,
by a wind He guided him through the night, as it is written. Cf. Exod 14:21
And when He brought down manna for the people He brought forth a wind,
and it heaped up fresh bread in the desert for the masses.
And when He wanted to raise quail a wind blew,

[49] That the "Spirit of God" in Genesis 1:2, was *not* the Holy Spirit was the teaching of most of the early Syriac fathers; see Ephrem, *Commentary on Genesis* I.7, Narsai, *Homilies on Creation*, III.117–120. It remained the dominant tradition among East Syrian commentators, but most later West Syrian writers tended to follow Basil of Caesarea who identified this wind/spirit with the Holy Spirit. See T. Jansma, "Investigations into the Early Syrian Fathers on Genesis," 104–106, A. Guillaumont, "Genèse 1, 1–2 selon les commentateurs syriaques," 126–131, and, especially, S. P. Brock, "The Ruaḥ Elōhīm of Gen 1,2 and its Reception History in the Syriac Tradition," *Lectures et relectures de la Bible. Festschrift P.-M. Bogaert* (BETL 144; Louvain: Peeters, 1999), 327–349.

[50] Reading the variant of Bedjan's text which transposes the words here.

435 ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵉⵖ:
ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ⵪
ⵏⵉⵖ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵜⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ:
ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ⵪
ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ:
440 ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ⵪
ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ:
ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ⵪
ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ:
ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ⵪
445 ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ:
ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ⵪
ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ:
ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ⵪
ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ ⵎⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵙⵙⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵡⵉⵔⵉ ⵏⵜⵜⴰ ⵏⵜⵜⴰⵏⵉ:

and from it He made it rain fresh meat for those many people. Cf. Num 11:31
Just as when He was exulting over His creation,
the wind went out over what had been fashioned in order to create,
just as it blows today on seeds and on trees,
and makes them grow by the commandment of the Divinity.
[The wind] lays down dew and when He commands it brings a sultry wind
by which He ripens the ears of corn and of grains.
For this reason He commanded it to hover[51] over creation,
that by it the works that came to be might separate from their companions:
the deep and the earth as well as the darkness and the wind that blows,
while the signal stands by to fashion the world in great wonder.
All the hosts were filled with marvel and wonder and awe,
and there was none among their congregations that dared to inquire.
Their Lord was hidden and where His place was they did not perceive,
but they were filled with an urge to bless Him wherever He is.

XIII. THE CREATION OF LIGHT

Then the hidden Lord spoke, "'Let there be light!'
And there was light," and the hosts were moved to shout out. Gen 1:3

[51] Syr. *ṭṭraḥef*, same root as *rûḥāfâ* above. See also S. P. Brock, "The Ruaḥ Elōhīm of Gen 1,2 and its Reception History in the Syriac Tradition," 328–329, where he points out that in these contexts this root also carries the sense of "to care/have compassion for." This is the very explanation given to Basil by that "certain Syrian" now known to have been Eusebius of Emesa; see Basil, *Homilies on the Hexaemeron*, II.6.

ᱚᱦᱚᱱ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ ᱪᱷᱚᱠᱚᱨᱟ ᱱᱚᱣᱟ ᱞᱮᱞᱟᱜᱟ ᱡᱩᱫᱟ᱾ 450
ᱚᱠᱚᱭ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ ᱫᱚ ᱚᱞᱮᱭᱟᱜ ᱞᱟᱹᱜᱤᱫ ᱪᱮᱫᱟᱣᱟᱜ:
ᱡᱤᱪᱟᱣ ᱟᱱᱤ ᱡᱩᱢᱟ ᱵᱚᱦᱚᱞ ᱞᱟᱹᱜᱤᱫ ᱟᱨᱩᱵᱟ᱾
ᱟᱢ ᱡᱟᱣ ᱚᱠᱚᱭ ᱱᱚᱞᱟ ᱞᱮᱞᱟᱜᱟ ᱛᱟᱞᱟᱢᱛᱮᱱᱟ:
ᱚᱢᱱᱚᱞᱟ ᱞᱟᱹᱜᱤᱫ ᱠᱚ ᱯᱚᱨᱚᱵᱩ ᱡᱤᱞᱚᱨᱟᱜᱟ᱾
ᱚᱡᱩᱢᱟ ᱞᱩᱞᱩ ᱛᱮᱱᱮ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱱᱚᱞᱟ ᱚᱠᱚᱫᱚ: 455
ᱚᱢᱚᱯᱚᱜ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱟᱹ ᱠᱚᱞᱚᱢᱛᱟ ᱚᱞᱟᱜᱟᱱᱟ᱾
ᱚᱠᱚᱱᱚ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱚᱠᱚᱨᱮ ᱞᱟᱹᱜᱤᱫ ᱪᱮᱫᱟᱣᱟ:
ᱡᱤᱞᱚᱨᱟᱜᱟ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱚᱱᱚᱛᱚ ᱚᱠᱚᱨᱮ ᱯᱚᱨᱚᱵᱩ᱾
ᱚᱠᱚᱱᱚ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱥᱟᱦᱟᱨᱟ ᱟᱨᱩᱵᱟ:
ᱚᱡᱩᱢᱟ ᱱᱩᱞᱩᱢ ᱠᱚᱞᱚᱢᱛᱟ ᱚᱞᱟᱜᱟᱱᱟ᱾ 460
ᱚᱠᱚᱨᱮ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱥᱟᱦᱟᱨᱟ ᱚᱠᱚᱨᱮ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ:
ᱚᱢᱱᱚᱞᱟ ᱞᱟᱹᱜᱤᱫ ᱠᱚ ᱯᱚᱨᱚᱵᱩ ᱡᱤᱞᱚᱨᱟᱜᱟ᱾
ᱚᱠᱚᱱᱚ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱥᱟᱦᱟᱨᱟ ᱚᱠᱚᱨᱮ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ:
ᱚᱠᱚᱱᱚ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱥᱟᱦᱟᱨᱟ ᱚᱠᱚᱨᱮ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ᱾ 465
ᱚᱠᱚᱨᱮ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ ᱠᱚᱫᱚ ᱥᱟᱦᱟᱨᱟ ᱚᱠᱚᱨᱮ ᱟᱢᱟᱜ:
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They heard that command and saw the work that came to be,
and from their assemblies glory rose up to the hidden Lord.
A voice set up the creation of light and it made them marvel,
and with wonder they roused their voice to give praise.
The commandment went forth from where the Divinity was hidden,
it drove away the "darkness of the waters" and brought forth light.
It showed the night a path on which to go, and drove it out,
and the day entered and rose in its place that it too might rule.
It rose, but the darkness remained above the waters,
for the space of a night, and then it was spoken, and light came into being. Gen 1:3
That first night was from the darkness,
that came from the clouds by which the deep was covered.
After it had remained a measure of twelve hours,
the day, a new creation, dawned over what had been fashioned.
"God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light," Gen 1:3
and the great day arose and the hosts shouted out.
They did not know how they had come to be from nothing,
but they saw that light had come to be and they learned from[52] the Creator
that He had commanded and they came to be just as the light had come to be,
for His nature was hidden but His workmanship was manifest and exalted.

[52] Read here *men*, following Ms. L. 2, instead of *'al*.

ⵜⵜⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏ ⵜⵙⵙⴰⵡⵉⵜ ⵜⵉⵏ ⵜⵜⵓⵔⵉⵖ ⵜⵉⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏ ⵜⵙⵙⴰⵡⵉⵜ ⵜⵉⵏ

The day became day-time[53] that was filled with all sorts of joys,
The first-born of its brothers was the beloved head of its companions.
Sunday came to be full of mysteries and laden with types,
drawn to coming into existence in the world though it did not [yet] exist.
[God's] creative energy went into labor and gave birth to those two brothers:
the night which is darkness and the day which is full of light.
Both are beautiful though they are not at all similar to each other;
but this is clear: whatever the Lord made is beautiful.
The first day, the head of the world, is a great beauty,
the beginning of the cycle that beckons the onset of creation.
Night was the first-born and took its place before the day,
then light came, drove it off, entered and arose to become the first-born.
To Isaac Rebecca gave birth to Esau and Jacob
who, like day and night, did not resemble one another.
Esau, the first-born, was of a dark color like the night,
then Jacob came forth and, like the day, grabbed his foot. Cf. Gen 24:26
Day came forth and grabbed the foot of night, its brother,
and it stood one day that it might be the foundation for the world.
That first day that came to be is more marvelous
than that light about which the hidden Lord said, "there was." Cf. Gen 1:3
That day did not have any hours of daytime,

[53] Here "the day," Syr. *'îmâmâ*, is the period of twenty-four hours, whereas "day-time," Syr., *yawmâ*, was that twelve-hour part of the day that was distinguished from night.

ⵜⵉⵎⵣⵡⵉⵔⵉⵏ ⵜⵉⵏⵎⵍⵍⴰⵍ ⵜⵉⵎⵣⵡⵉⵔⵉⵏ ⵜⵉⵏⵎⵍⵍⴰⵍ

nor did it move away at the sixth or ninth[54] [hour], or when "there was evening."
For the comely light of that day does not move around,
it is indeed retained over creation in order to give it light.
Nor did it arise from the east and then begin to move like the sun,
it had come into being just when it was said, "Let there be light." Gen 1:3
It did not go from here to there counting the hours,
nor did it ever have any dawns or dusks.[55]
"God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light"; Gen 1:3
it came into being just as it was written, there was no dawning.
At the moment it arrived the light entered, arose, and served;
so long as it was required for that day it would maintain its place.
One daytime existed from that night and that daytime,
and an evening and a morning quickly ran out, one after the other.[56]

[54] Reading Syr., *teša'* with note, instead of *'ĕsar*, "ten," found in text.

[55] Here again, Jacob seems to be in opposition to Ephrem who held that this light held sway for only the three days before the creation of the sun, then it did "move away"; see Ephrem, *Commentary on Genesis*, I.8–9.

[56] Jacob devotes an entire, albeit short, verse homily to the praise of the morning and the evening; see the "Homily on the Giving of Praise for the Morning and the Evening" in P. Bedjan, *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis*, III.907–912, English translation in Holy Transfiguration Monastery, "A Homily on the Giving of Praise for the Morning and Evening," *The True Vine* 7.2[26] (1998), 59–64.

ⵍⵍⴰ ⵜⵜⵓⵔⵉⵜ ⵓⵔ ⵜⵜⵉⵜⵜⵓⵔⵉⵜ ⵙⵙⵓⵖⵍ ⵏ ⵜⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ ⵜⵜⵉⵜⵜⵓⵔⵉⵜ ⵙⵙⵓⵖⵍ ⵏ ⵜⵎⵓⵔⵜ ⵏⵏⵙ

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